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marriage produced only daughters or no children at all. Because of the necessity of providing against a high death rate, the premium on sons resulted in over-population, only partly offset by a high rate of female infanticide. 596 182

Just as sex, age, and generation determined an individual's status within the family, so did these factors determine his behavior and position in the community and the world at large. An additional determinant of his standing was the status of his family in society. 554 596

Authority and dominance were the province of males. Women might, and occasionally did, exercise overt leadership. More frequently, they were the power behind the throne. Such cases were exceptional, however. In modern times at least, supremacy was neither desired by women nor readily admitted to when possessed. 596

Age was honored relatively and absolutely. Long life automatically gave its possessor higher standing in the community, but whatever age he attained, he was to show respect to his elders and members of an older generation. In the society of traditional China, age implied the accumulation of wisdom and experience vital to society in times of decision or crisis. 888

Individual status also improved with education, more particularly with the attainment of a degree in the official examinations and appointment to official position. An individual's educational or official career was usually dependent 554 596

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consumption. Male family members worked together in the fields, workshop, or store to produce the goods on which the family mainly relied for a living. Sons nearly always followed their father's occupation and seldom left home. Women worked in the home, taking care of the children and turning out the family's clothes and shoes. Where sericulture was practiced, women managed the entire industry from the cultivation of mulberry trees to the weaving of cloth. Food and clothing were allotted each member according to his needs, as they were determined by the head of the house and permitted by the family's circumstances. 596 462

Some variation from this pattern occurred among the upper-class families. Gentry-officials and merchants were often away from home; they frequently had personal income from salaries or business, from which they met their expenses without resorting to the family treasury. 596

The family and its extensions in China also functioned to provide security in old age, food or material help to the poor, and employment for needy or deserving relatives when possible. That a son should fail to provide for his parents in their old age was unthinkable. Were the sons dead or in some other way unable to assist their parents, the aged would be cared for by other close relatives or by the clan. Deeply sanctioned by kinship morality and firmly rooted in Chinese government and business, nepotism was one of the most resistant factors to the advance of the modern political, industrial, and business systems in the twentieth century. 596 888